

I) Objection to Specification under 35 U.S.C. § 112 (paper no. 8, page 2).

The specification has been objected to under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the rejections. However, in an effort to expedite prosecution of this application, applicant has obviated the objections relating to claims 15 - 19 by making certain deletions. These deletions notwithstanding, it is understood that a radially contracted stent includes an at least partially contracted stent; an expanded stent includes an at least partially expanded stent; and evaporating the solvent includes evaporating at least a portion of the solvent.

Support for "bonding" is found, *inter alia*, in claim 6 as originally filed, the subject matter of which has been added to the specification herein.

In view of the foregoing, applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of these objections.

II) Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112 (paper no. 8, pages 2 - 4)

Certain claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Applicant respectfully disagrees. However, in an effort to expedite prosecution of this application, applicant has obviated the objections by making certain amendments to the claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

III) Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (paper no. 8, page 4).

Claims 12 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as allegedly being anticipated by MacGregor (U.S. Patent 5,015,253). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Both claim 12 and claim 17 recite that at least part of the stent is "bonded" to the tube. See claim 12, line 7 and claim 17, line 9. Such is not disclosed in MacGregor. In fact,

MacGregor teaches that the stent is "released" or "deployed" from the tubular body, and thus cannot be "bonded" to the tubular body. (See Column 2, lines 1 - 6).

Thus, MacGregor does not anticipate applicant's invention as embodied in claims 12 and 17, and applicant respectfully requests that these rejections be withdrawn.

IV) Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (paper no. 8, pages 4 - 8).

(A) Claims 13, 14, 18 and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over MacGregor with Gianturco '824 and further in view of Crocker et al. (U.S. Patent 5,421,826). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

The subject claims relate to methods of applying a covering layer to a stent (claims 13 and 14) and methods of coating a stent (claims 18 and 19). In the invention as embodied in claims 13 and 18, an adhesive medium is cured between at least a portion of a stent and tube. In the invention as embodied in claims 14 and 19, an elastomeric composition is polymerized between a tube and stent.

MacGregor actually teaches away from such processes, by requiring that the stent be "released" or "deployed" from the tubular body. Thus, the tubular body of MacGregor cannot be adhered or polymerized to the stent. (See Column 2, lines 1 - 6). Accordingly, MacGregor should not be utilized in combination with the secondary documents to reject the claims, and it is requested that these rejections be withdrawn.

(B) Claims 11 and 16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Crocker et al. in view of Kiezulus (U.S. Patent 5,026,607). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Both claims 11 and 16 relate to a process wherein a surface is coated with a lifting medium. Such is neither taught nor suggested in the cited documents. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that these rejections be withdrawn.

Applicant acknowledges that the following documents have been cited but not relied upon to reject the claims:

U.S. Patent No. 4,331,727, Maas, May 1982;  
U.S. Patent No. 4,710,181, Fuqua, December 1987;  
U.S. Patent No. 5,026,607, Kiezulas, June 1991;  
U.S. Patent No. 5,100,429, Sinofsky et al., March 1992;  
U.S. Patent No. 5,272,012, Opolski, December 1993;  
U.S. Patent No. 5,382,234, Cornelius et al., January 1995;  
U.S. Patent No. 5,389,106, Tower, February 1995;  
U.S. Patent No. 5,395,349, Quiachon et al., March 1995; and  
U.S. Patent No. 5,421,826, Crocker et al., June 1995. ~~is not true use~~

In view of the foregoing, applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance. Such favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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